

The Monthly Musical Record.

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OUR MUSIC PAGES.

IN the number of the MONTHLY MUSICAL RECORD for October, 1880, *apropos* of the presentation of one of Mr. J. L. Hatton's compositions in the music pages, a short sketch of his life and labours and of his services in the cause of art was given as an introduction and accompaniment to that piece. This will be probably fresh in the memories of our readers, and it will be only necessary to refer to that number as a reason for not repeating the subject in this place and at this time, when another of his most charming part-songs, entitled "The Poppy," is offered to grace our music pages. "The Poppy" is a charming four-part song for mixed voices—soprano, contralto, tenor, and bass. Like everything by the same composer it is full of melody, very well laid out for the voices, and wonderfully pleasing and graceful in its effect.

A CURIOUS ORIGINAL.

BOOKS written expressly for the information of posterity are often regarded by the inheritors with that amount of reverence which implies due respect, the due respect being for the most part shown by keeping as far away from them as possible. Acquaintance with these literary bequests is testified by a knowledge of their titles, and a glib facility in quotation of those parts which somehow or other have found their way into more modern productions which are in every-day use, the authors of which have probably derived their knowledge from some writer as modern to them as their works are modern to their readers. Only very few have probably seen the originals, and still fewer read them through carefully. The stilted diction of the books of a past time is so strange to present readers, that it is almost as troublesome to follow as the writing in a foreign tongue imperfectly understood. The portions which are best appreciated are those which deal familiarly with familiar things, and having some degree of human interest, are likely to interest humanity in all times. These are the portions which are likely to be best known. They invisibly weave themselves into our thoughts, and become instrumental in the formation of habits of mind and actions of body. Their power for good or evil is greater than the more laboured productions intended by the author to have that effect. The lofty diction adopted enchanting the mind, but does not always move the soul. Humanity is treated as an abstract thing, and not as a reality. The motives of men, which ought always to be high, are not invariably excited to action by blank verse. The homely proverb has often more influence in determining character than the best rounded periods of the so-called classical writers of a language. The common affairs of life are never transacted in stately recitative, nor do we address each other in hexameter or sesquipedalian verse. There is no reason for believing that any body of men in this work-a-day world ever did so. If we judged by the books written "for the improvement of the human race," we ought respectfully to admit that "once upon a time" it might have been so. We should also gather that they were in a great measure insensible to those little kindnesses of behaviour one towards another, which are received and acknowledged in the most colloquial forms, and somehow or other looked upon as the salt which preserves good

fellowship. It is only occasionally that we find glimpses of a familiarity of speech, which not arising from ignorance or vulgarity, testify to the fact that our forefathers were not altogether superior to ourselves in their treatment of the affairs of every-day life. The plays and dramas of the last century show manners and customs expressed by forms of speech which we somehow think stiff and formal. Even in the novels, the characters speak a language which our American cousins would rightly call "high falutin'." These works are carefully preserved, their old editions anxiously sought after by collectors, and their substance and essence reprinted time after time. How many people talk of Addison's "Spectator," for example, who have never read it! How many libraries are there in which the eight volumes of the work are among the undisturbed and dusty-topped treasures? Even in the very newspapers of a bygone day, supposed by many to be, like the stage, a reflection of the "form and pressure of the times," there are phrases and sentences which tend to show the artificiality of our ancestors in literary labours.

It is refreshing to find, however, occasional evidence of the existence of those who believed in the "humanity of human nature," and who having something to say were not ashamed to write to posterity as we must believe they spoke to each other. Opportunities for strengthening this belief do not occur very frequently, but when they do, they display conclusively that our "forbears" were much the same sort of folk as we ourselves. It was not the custom to write familiarly. The man who produced a book was careful to remember that he was committing his bantling to a fire of criticism that would condemn any violation of the buckram principles of the past to the punishment duly reserved for such offences. If his book ministered to an existing taste, even though it was not in the form declared to be necessary in the world of letters, it was bought, and quietly read in corners, brought a profit to the publisher and only private fame for the author, for he rarely dared to append his name to his work. It was read so well, in fact, that whole editions were frequently read clean away, for very few copies of books that must have been popular ever come down to the present generation in an unmitigated condition. Those that are perfect bear tokens of having been well thumbed and constantly used.

One such book—bought at a bookstall in a country town for threepence—now before us, is a treasure in this respect, and also a "curious original." It was printed at a time when artificiality in authorship was *de rigueur*, when men set about writing their books with a solemnity of manner like to that in which they undertook a journey, making their wills and settling all their worldly affairs before starting on what we should now call a fifty miles "run down into the country," to be "back again in a few hours."

The little volume we speak of is in more ways than one interesting to musicians, though it does not contain a note of music. It is called "The Ladies' Polite Songster; or, Harmony for the Fair-sex. Containing a Select Collection of the newest and most admired Songs; as they are sung at the THEATRES, PUBLIC GARDENS, &c. Together with the Songs as they were sung at the JUBILEE. Also a great variety of curious Originals, particularly adapted to the ear of the FAIR-SEX. To which are added a choice Collection of COUNTRY-DANCES for the ensuing year. Likewise plain directions for singing with a good grace: by which persons with BAD VOICES may render themselves AGREEABLE; and such as have tolerable ones may shine to the utmost advantage. London: Printed for T. Shepherd, at No. 147, in the Minories;

Stephen Smith, No. 17, Pater-noster Row ; and sold by most booksellers in England."

It is in every sense of the word what the title-page calls some of the songs it contains, a "curious original."

There is a very pretty frontispiece drawn by Wale, and engraved by Rennoldson. Three ladies are seated in an arbour, one in a round hat, singing from a small book—"The Ladies' Polite Songster," perhaps ; a second, in a like head-covering, joining in the chorus ; and a third—whose back is towards the spectator, clothed in a hood and silken sacque, and whose tiny high-heeled shoes are daintily shown in shadow—has her left hand uplifted as though beating time for the benefit of a gentleman in a three-cornered hat, in an elegant attitude, blowing an extempore part on the German flute.

Beneath the picture are the following lines—

" Azure Summer's gaily drest,
Waving fields with plenty blest ;
All conspire to give us joy,
Let us then the gifts employ."

The imagery and the moral point of these lines, quite in conformity with the "reigning taste," may have been intended as a concession to the demands of the period, and a sort of apology for the lack of formality in the general tenor of the contents of the book. There is no date affixed, but it may be inferred, from some of the songs relating to the Shakspeare Jubilee, which took place in 1769, under the direction of David Garrick, that the "Polite Songster" was published about the following year. This supposition is strengthened by the existence of certain of the songs from Dibdin's "Padlock," and the absence of any songs belonging to any works produced later than 1770.

Of the one hundred and fifty-seven songs in the collection, scarcely six are known even by name to musicians of the present day, and only two may be found reprinted in modern collections, namely, "There was a Jolly Miller," and "By the gaily circling Glass." Some of the pieces and their metaphors and expressions are very quaint and piquant, many are extremely artificial and pompous, and a few, though "particularly adapted to the ear of the fair sex," do not convey a very exalted idea of the compiler's notions of propriety. At the end of the book are directions for the performance of the figures of several country dances. These are called—"The Stratford Jubilee," "The North Country Lass," "Light and Airy," "Bow Bells," "The Brave Corsicans," "Trip to Weymouth," "The Bill of Rights," "Ridotto al Fresco," "The Padlock," "Plymouth Assembly," "The Wild Irishman," and "The Ramble." The description of the dance called "The Padlock" will give a fair example of the others. "The first couple gallop down the second couple, up again and cast off ; the second couple do the same ; the two men lead between the two women and turn, the women do the same ; hey with the second woman, then with the second man ; cross over half figure ; right and left." All of this was probably, and maybe still is, clear to dancers ; but to the majority of folk unacquainted with the mysteries of the mazy dance, is almost as unintelligible as the language employed at the period in literary works of more serious import.

The portion of the book which will doubtless be most interesting to musical readers is that which contains "directions for singing." These are so quaintly expressed that they may be quoted entire. The remarks are full of point, and pregnant with purpose, and for all that they are designed to impart information, are written in so familiar a vein that they seem almost to conjure up the writer before the reader. At all events they show that

there were some writers, men of education or reading, who did not think it beneath the dignity of letters to adopt a colloquial phraseology in imparting what ought to be considered as belonging in a certain degree to the department of education.

The classical allusions made may be regarded as a sort of salve to the consciences of those who held that all literary efforts should be of an exalted character. This is how he begins :—"Though the first requisite to make the accomplished singer be a fine voice, yet I can boldly affirm, by the observation and experience of several years, that there are many incorrigible bawlers with sweet melodious pipes, and as many entertaining performers in the vocal way, who are under no obligations to nature. This can be accounted for no otherwise than by an artificial conduct of the voice, or what is usually styled a manner. What Matt. Prior says of life in general may be, with great propriety, apply'd to singing—

" Beyond the fix'd and settled rules
Of voice and virtue in the schools,
Beyond the letter of the law,
Which keeps our men and maid's in awe ;
The better sort should set before 'em
A GRACE, A MANNER, A DECORUM."

'Tis not merely singing in time and tune, and precisely observing the pedantic dictates of Mr. Ticklekey the musick master, but there must be an ease, an elegance, a taste ; which, however natural, may, from the subsequent rules, be improved.

" RULE I.

" Never be ask'd twice to sing ; for to be over-squeamish in that particular savours of low breeding and ill manners, and is impolitick too ; for 'tis always dangerous to raise an expectation beyond the scale of satisfaction ; which precaution, I hope, will be an infallible cure for all fictitious colds, hoarsenesses, want of practice, &c.

" RULE II.

" As poetry and music are sister arts, they certainly ought not to be enemies to each other ; it is therefore absolutely necessary that ladies and gentlemen should sing distinctly and intelligibly, so that the words may be comprehended, and that the sense is not quaver'd away by the sound.

" RULE III.

" As it is the business of the composer to make the sound an echo to the sense, so it is the business of the singer also, with this addition, that his gesture, as well as his voice, be accordant to every note.

" RULE IV.

" As there is a satiety in all things, or (to use the vulgar phrase) as too much of one thing is good for nothing, it is highly requisite to know when to finish with grace ; for tho' it is bad to be ask'd twice to sing, it is still worse to be ask'd once to hold your peace.

" I shall conclude these instructions with a few lines from my friend Horace, which are a satire upon the singers of his time :—

" *Omnibus hoc vitium est cantoribus inter amicos
Ut unquam inducant animum cantare rogati,
Injusti nunquam desistant.*"

" *Nay, 'tis the same with all the coxcomb crew
Of singing men and singing women too ;
Do they not set their cat-calls up of course ?
The king himself may ask them 'till he's hoarse ;
But would you split their wind-pipes and their lungs,
The fairest way's to bid them hold their tongues.*"

The present reader may, and probably will, make his own comment upon the rules and the satirical remarks. He may also be of opinion that many of our modern

drawing-room performers might be the better for a knowledge of the hints here given, originally for the benefit of those of our forefathers who desired to sing "with a good grace." He will, moreover, perhaps not be sorry to have made acquaintance with the unknown writer of a pedantic age who did not scruple to employ homely phraseology in adding to the knowledge of his contemporaries. His book was not compiled for the benefit of posterity; but is it not possible that some may derive benefit from the shrewd and apt remarks made? It is certain that there is a great amount of worldly wisdom in his plain directions "by which persons with bad voices may render themselves agreeable; and such as have tolerable ones may shine to the utmost advantage." The world has not grown much wiser during the course of the last century. It may be therefore excusable if good advice is here repeated, even though it is derived from a collection containing "a variety of curious originals," not the least of all being the expressions of the compiler of the book.

ON THE STUDY OF PART-WRITING.

THE wonderful progress in the elucidation of the true principles of art criticism, and the immense advance in teaching power which have been made within the last few years, although aiding the young musician as little as any of our students, have not left even him entirely without improved help. Any one old enough to be conversant with the style in which, thirty years ago, what was truthfully called the "theory" of music was taught, will congratulate his younger brethren upon their emancipation from the fetters of those most unfortunate victims, the "articled pupils" of past days.

There is, however, still much to be amended before the teaching of the grammar of music may be regarded as entirely satisfactory, or as on a level with the general training of scientific students.

Among the points imperatively demanding attention is the needful expansion of the maxims of our forefathers concerning the art of part-writing, or "counterpoint," as it still is, somewhat absurdly, called. For, while the laws of acoustics, the relationship and tendencies of sounds, the elasticity of dissonances, and other rudimentary matters have had much attention, what would appear to be the natural deductions from the enlarged notions of those principles have been only timidly reasoned out; and, in the higher branches of music writing, the student is still fettered by the imposition of rules confessedly obsolete.

As a continuation of the simple principles which, in the earlier study of harmony, forbade certain awkward progressions and disagreeable consecutions, the rules of "counterpoint" are directed to the attainment, in each of the combined parts, of a greater tunefulness and melodic interest. The different patterns, or "species," stereotyped by the use of many generations, suffice, when their conditions are so liberally enlarged as to admit modern harmonies, for the training and exercise of students. But to confine lessons in part-writing within the fetters of a few simple chords is to tacitly admit that the rules will not bear the light of our present insight into the affinities of sounds, and are not fitted for the requirements of our enlarged and purer system.

The study of harmony has, of late years, become almost popular, and, amid a great deal of useless talk, some slight advance has been made; but the so-called contrapuntal rules still retain all their antique dogmatism.

Musical language, comprising two distinct qualities—*"Time and Tune"*—and deriving its expressive power

from the duration, as well as from the varied pitch, of its syllables, it is evident that combined melodies having sounds of entirely uniform length are void of one important element of contrast. Between times that move always with like pulsation there must be some little similarity, especially when they are so constructed as to admit of combination. The contrast of melodies depending not merely upon diversities of pitch, but also upon variations in the length of the sounds, what is known as the "first species of counterpoint" is unworthy of the name, being mere harmony of the simplest kind, in which all the parts move at the same instant. In fact—as usually planned—it is not even that: for the finding in adjoining chords a fresh sound for each part involves so much, and often such ridiculous skipping about, that the repetition of a note is not (and could not usefully be) objected to. The practice of the "first species" is, therefore, entirely useless; and its title a glaring misnomer. It is scarcely necessary to add that in such plain harmony every form of every modern chord should be used, and the exclusion of any one may fairly be regarded as an evidence of the inability of the writer to free himself from old prejudices, and to obtain an insight into the principles (rather than to remember the dogmas) of the science.

The study of really effective part-writing commences with the union of notes of various lengths. What are generally called the "second and third species of counterpoint" differ chiefly in the greater, or less, rapidity of the more florid part, or parts. Before they can be usefully attempted, a thorough knowledge of discords should be acquired. The study of harmony—or the effects of different combinations of sounds—instucts as to the comparative harshness of the various dissonances which any chromatic scale affords. Bad part-writing will always result from imperfect knowledge of those dissonances which form the chief constituents of the more rapidly moving parts. But when a student is familiar with the effect of each dissonant sound in a chord (whether accented or otherwise) and with all the variations of that effect arising from the presence in a higher or lower part, of the octave of the resolution of the dissonant sound, he requires no further rule of progression; but may safely dispense with all the fragmentary maxims about $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{2}{3}$, $\frac{3}{4}$, &c., which still linger among us as relics of that laziest of absurdities, a "figured bass."

Evidently the harshness of a dissonant combination is greater when the offending, or fidgety, sound twinges the ear sharply on an accented pulse than when it is quietly passed through between the rhythmic steps; and no special rule is needed to teach that its effect will also be in proportion to its length: consequently the more rapidly a florid part moves, the less irritating will its offences become.

For instance—an ascending major seventh could not, in equally moving harmony, be agreeably used below any octave of its resolution; but, in a florid part, the dissonance becomes less and less objectionable as the rapidity of the movement of the part increases.

When a sufficient (and not the usual smattering of) knowledge of dissonances has been acquired, an easy way of utilising those modern condiments is:—(1), in each chord of four-part harmony to make one of the parts move in notes of half the usual length; and, when this can readily be managed, (2), to adopt the further restriction of including all the shorter notes within the same part. Thus a readiness in the "second species" of part-writing will be gained in a very short time; not only without difficulty, but as the natural and easiest way of using those dissonant sounds which serve as the season-

ing spices of the more dramatic harmony of modern times.

The adoption of four-part writing for the purpose is recommended because, in his exercises in harmony, the student must have become familiar with chords thus arranged in their most useful form to suit the requirements of voices of the four natural orders, and of orchestral instruments of the stringed family.

In reducing the number of parts it is necessary only to bear in mind that the third from the base of every chord—or some dissonance resolving naturally upon the third—should be included before the fifth. Of course there is no restriction as to the shortness of the notes in the more florid part, or parts; or as to the manner in which, in the different strata of the harmony, various degrees of floridness may be combined, provided that the pattern adopted in any part be not broken.

(To be continued.)

GEORGE ONSLOW.

(Translated from W. H. Riehl's "Musikalische Charakterköpfe.")

"GO ON SLOW."—This is the motto of the Onslow family. The record of the genealogical myth in musical dictionaries reports that this well-known composer is an offshoot of this ancient house. If we do not take the sentence with its trivial meaning, as one writes in Germany on the flag of the Landsturm, but commanding a steady, slow, but at the same time sound and healthy development, then George Onslow has carried this characteristic with great honour as an artist. For few modern artists can be named who, in their creations from the beginning, came forward as ready and sure, and afterwards progressed as steadily, by degrees, but without extravagance, to the aim which they put before them. If on one side one can recognise the Englishman in the strain of his character, on the other hand the musician Onslow is artistically so little connected with the native land of his family, that he would have been the last to have accepted the honour of being called an English composer. His works are especially part of the history of German music, and it is the duty of Germany to keep in honour the memory of this foreigner, but with them an artistic naturalised master.

Young Onslow left his native country, he overcame all the prejudices of his rank and family, in order to live in Germany, and become a devotee of Beethoven. With a rough perseverance and exclusiveness, he devoted his best powers to that part of the art which has been almost the special characteristic of German masters—the higher forms of chamber-music. The centre point of his artistic creation is the string quartet. No other nation has ever approached Germany in the production of this beautiful and most noble flower of chamber-music. Only two men of foreign nationality have made the stringed quartet their speciality, so that according to the value as well as the contents of their works they could compete with their most important quartet writers, namely, Boccherini and Onslow. But both followed German models. Boccherini, after and with Haydn, the oldest quartet composer, assisted in creating this grand new form of music, and with Onslow we have buried the *last* of the line of composers who *exclusively* became great by means of this the higher chamber-music. Now and then these quartets are still written, but the composers of quartets by profession, who, like old Franz Krommer, spent their whole life in nothing but composing chamber-music, and could count their quartets and quintets by hundreds, exist no more. Onslow was the last master of this kind.

The zenith of Onslow's powers falls into that musical

interregnum which, specially for the instrumental productions, extends from the death of Beethoven to the more genial penetration of the powers of Mendelssohn. At that time Spohr was the radiant star who understood how to transfer the elegiac tone of romantic lyric, as it has been shown, with the most tasteful technique, in the best songs of Fouqué and Brentano—without comparison of the ordinary steady and scholarlike way of the romantic poets—into the stringed quartet. Andreas Romberg had not yet been quite forgotten, although the romancist began to get tired of his extended form of playing, as well as of the colourless accuracy of his counterpoint execution. Krommer, seventy years old, who with remarkable flexibility not only shared all the development of chamber-music from Haydn to Spohr, but also had actually gone through it in his own experience, also tried in his old days to chime once more in his last great quintets in the new romantic way. This modest man may expect the deserving recognition of honour, as he is the living historical encyclopædia of stringed quartets. Peter Haensel did well with the pleasing shapes and forms of Mozart and Haydn. The wonderful fantastic piano fantasy for string quartets of Franz Schubert, though mentioned already at that time, were but little known. The three great quartets of Cherubini were only known and understood by a small clique of connoisseurs, and all these were put aside with a shrug of uncertainty as mistaken attempts. George Onslow stepped into the middle of this still radiant circle of Epigoni, who were at the time so closely connected in many ways with the contemporary poetic Epigoni.

The different elements of all their various drifts of character are reflected in his works. He, however, did not take these up formally, but transformed them independently, sometimes even stubbornly, to a result which often would be more beautiful if the demon of originality had not prevailed with him. The demon always appears where a genuine originality becomes valuable, and then in a more extended way disturbs the conception of the newest composers. The despairing agony to discover whether one's ideas are really new in each note has become a desperate fever amongst the present composers. One can be bizarre, terse, measured, and still show nothing new; and this is sometimes the case in Onslow, although he stands in this respect to Wagner or Schumann like a true unconcerned child of nature.

In form Onslow leans towards Beethoven, but he makes it more pointed, and has more outward display, by which the idea is neglected. He wants a great free flow of melody and harmony, and his periods are sharp and short; not sharp on account of decency and modesty, nor *naïve* in its brevity, like we find it in the old masters, but they are pointed, epigrammatically sharp, as people write who study and think, and who add one neat little piece to another till an entirety is formed, which can only create a sensation as slowly as it has been formed. It is in this pointed sharpness that the peculiar difficulty in the execution of Onslow's quartets lies. At first sight they do not seem difficult to play—especially in the accompanying parts—but in the *tout ensemble* even the most learned musician would be bothered by an unexpected rhythmic version, a rare modulation, or a vexing change of part. Onslow's second violin or bass player should always be a correct and cool timist, as well as a good reader of music.

So, with all his similarity in outward technicalities, Onslow differs widely in his general musical tendency. He is in his quartets highly cultured, talented, cosmopolitan, his best points being his grace, elegance, and beautifully formed plastic. He seldom lays out the melancholy lamentation of the adagio without intertwining

with it ironically an undercurrent of humour. He rarely enters the dramatic field, and never—as Beethoven does in some quartets—the tragic. He is not lyrical in his setting, like Spohr is, or as we find at times Mendelssohn or Schubert; but he is a capital epic, who tells us captivating fairy tales with a thousand surprising and intellectual versions, not in the sincere Homeric *naïveté* of the great epic Haydn, but in the style of Tieck, Brentano, or Platen. The romantic irony which with the popular Carl M. von Weber only appeared to a small extent in the background has taken the front rank with the much more aristocratic Onslow. Overpowering affectation, growing passion, or weak extravagance are foreign to him. He is forced at times to powerful accents of musical expression, or to softly penetrating appeals to the heart, or he is even extravagantly liberal with outward signs, pathetic rhythms and modulations, but he never allows himself to be carried away by powerful inward passion. He is only passionate as far as a perfect gentleman in good society is permitted to be, but he is too gifted and liberal-minded to become cold and tedious.

It was only with such a character that it was possible that Onslow could be so peculiar on the one side in form and expression, that every one who had studied a few of his works can recognise the master in all the others, whilst at the same time the most varied tendencies of the period are included in them. His peculiarity lies even more in his manners than in his style. The smart cosmopolitan sees divers manners, various men, and many nationalities, and perhaps he takes up something unconsciously from the thousands that pass him, and it is specially through this that such a one becomes an interesting citizen, but in general he still retains his own manners and character. And so it was with Onslow that he could never belie, though he wrote German quartets, that he had lived for years in France, and at times you can even recognise in his German domestic music a sprinkling of French. One is not astonished at it, for after all it is still part and parcel of a gentleman to show a slight tinge of French in his education.

In the anapestic time or rhythm of Onslow's finales the French chanson is betrayed, approaching our quartet, and the conventional misuse which he makes of the chords of the seventh and chromatic harmonies, causes the French New Romancer to raise his head and point with an ironical expression to Berlioz and his associates. However, Onslow only takes advantage of these strange ways for elegant and piquant effects; he does not allow himself to be governed by them; he coquettes for awhile with the extravagances of the New Romantic School, seemingly for the purpose of ridiculing it afterwards. As long as he remains within the bounds of all that is elegant, agreeable, and humorous, all this appears very amiable; but it becomes objectionable as soon as he approaches a more serious task.

The earlier works of Onslow, in which he contented himself with giving forth elegant and graceful chamber music, stand for this reason artistically higher than his later works. From the very beginning he came forward as a perfect master, and his first work (three stringed quintets) already shows Onslow's mental power complete. There is nothing scholastic, nothing dilettante; there is no meandering or trying; the musician already stands firmly in his method. Even this shows the genuine cosmopolitan who will only appear in public when he has become a character, and is likely to be lionised. The first twenty works of Onslow show him in full blossom; later on he gradually outdid himself, and became more and more affected. But he always remained firm, measured, and elegant in form in all his artistic exhibitions. Most

likely the history of music cannot show another man who has come before the public with his work so carefully prepared as Onslow, and who has also made so many mistakes, but never overstepped the bounds of decency.

The great and lasting merit of Onslow lies in the certainty, plasticity, and continuity with which he handles the forms; it also lies in the application with which he has been devoted to the form of the severest and most difficult kind of music, namely, the stringed quartet. This is his merit particularly, because Onslow has really been the last quartet writer, his zenith corresponding with a period when want of form, degeneracy, and overloading of technicalities began to pour down on modern music. In this respect Onslow may be placed on a level with his contemporary, Platen, as both fulfilled the same mission. From what has been said before one will at once be able to find out many parallels with Platen. Platen had the good fortune to die early. Onslow, who lived to a great age, shows us in his later works, which, although affected, partiality for the natural ideality of the sense of form, that to which no doubt Platen would have arrived had he lived longer. Onslow has been pushed back by Mendelssohn, and, in fact, in some sort forced into oblivion. We are still expecting a Mendelssohn among modern artists. Mendelssohn was as perfect in form as Onslow, but his whole artistic nature was founded on richer and deeper ground. He brought new and great material to modern music; he endeavoured to bring the deep Germanic Christian spirit of Bach and Handel into the modern science of music, whilst Onslow, like Platen, had been an aesthetic heathen, contented with the *cultus* of the transparent reflection of, and the enticing diversion with, Hellenic plastic form. Therefore Mendelssohn gains the sympathy of the professional musician, as well as of the whole of modern educated society, which, insensibly, takes up a Christian conservative spirit. Whoever does not grasp Mendelssohn as a musician will, at least, yield him importance as one of the revivalists of the old masters of church music. Does it not seem extraordinary that this should be the same Mendelssohn with whom the question may arise whether he does not coquette in his way of writing with the Jews? Those who become elated by Mendelssohn's religious tendency will find Onslow as great a blank to them as Platen.

Onslow stopped at chamber music, and Platen at lyric. In his operas the overture was the best. His symphonies amount to stringed quartets for orchestra. His real stringed quartets are at times simply domestic music like that of the older masters, rather than *salon* music in the best sense of the word. One can put up with *salon* music like Onslow's, but it has its home in the idealistic, non-existing *salon*. To be really played as it should be there it is too ingenious, too difficult of execution, and no doubt before one of Onslow's quartets the audience would probably vanish.

Such music can scarcely become popular, but it has obtained a thorough grasp on all men of musical education, particularly in Germany, and it will justly maintain its place in all the quartet evenings of a German home. The partiality and manners of Onslow will scarcely seduce the young musicians of our times, but we may learn something by his clearness and perfection of form, and more so by his power of construction, at a time when a new *Evangel* is preached, which considers the destruction of form as the height of all musical art.

If ever, at some future day, there should spring up a poet preaching that all poetic art is a long and tedious weaving, that truth and nature in poetry requires merely such writing as Jean Paul's stretched verses, it will be

then that one can again recommend Platen's works. So it is in face of those fanatics of the musical prolonged verse at the present moment perfectly appropriate, for the musician to go back more diligently to the study of chamber music of the early period of Onslow, provided they first learn by heart as their breviary the works of the three greatest quartet composers of Germany.

PACCINI'S OPERA *SAPPHO*.

IN a notice in the MONTHLY MUSICAL RECORD of January on this year's opera season in Rome, reference was made to Paccini's opera *Sappho*, which has recently been performed [with great success at the Argentina Theatre. The success in Rome has been followed by a similar one in Florence; and the opera is in many respects so remarkable a work, that a brief sketch of it may not be out of place here, the less so as, strangely enough, *Sappho* has never been given in London.

Sappho was brought out about ten years ago at Milan, and there, as subsequently throughout Italy, created so much sensation that Paccini's claims to the position of a first-rate composer were fully recognised. He was well known and extremely popular in all parts of Italy, but more particularly in Tuscany, where he spent the greater part of his life, and promoted music as an art with an unselfish zeal, which has borne fruit wherever his inspiring influence has been at work. He had already written three or four operas before he composed *Sappho*, and among them the *Stella di Napoli* became fairly well known. But they belong more or less to the light Italian or "Bellini" school, whereas *Sappho* marks a decided departure from the sentimental and effeminate style in vogue at the time, and is not only Paccini's master-work, but in many respects the forerunner of that reformed and vigorous school of which Boito, Ponchielli, and others are the leading representatives. In the memoirs he has left, Paccini gives some interesting details touching his conception of what a "lyrical tragedy" such as *Sappho* should be, and his views as regards the treatment of so dramatic a subject, to which he devoted himself chiefly during his stay at Viareggio, a well-known watering-place on the coast between Leghorn and Spezia, where the event has been perpetuated by a marble slab. In his memoirs he tells us that he repeatedly read the few works which have been handed down to us on the music of ancient Greece, and that he made it his aim to infuse into his favourite opera some of the spirit and the character of that Greek art in which poetry and music were blended. So far as original Greek music is concerned, it may at once be said that there is no trace of it in *Sappho*, nor would that be possible, seeing that we know almost nothing of the exact nature and of the harmonies of that music. But Paccini's merit consists in having taken the trouble to read up his subject before writing his opera—a merit which is rare in Italian composers—and, consequently, he has not only spared us those offences against the ritual of ancient Greece so common in Italian operas treating classical subjects, but has also shown that he has grasped, perhaps unconsciously, the principles of lyrical drama; for *Sappho* compares not unfavourably with Gluck's *Iphigenia* or *Armida*, and Cherubini's *Medea*.

The libretto of *Sappho* is by Camarano, but the dramatic treatment of the subject was evidently supplied by Paccini. The action is, like that of all classical subjects, essentially simple.

The scene of the first act is laid at Olympia during the 42nd Olympiad; that of the second and third acts in Leucadia, or Leucas of the ancients, one of the seven Ionian islands. Sappho, the famous poetess of Lesbos, who is present at the Olympian festival with Alceus, the poet, has excited the wrath of Alcandrus, the priest of Apollo's temple in Leucadia, by denouncing the worship of Apollo in that island. He is the more incensed against her as the charms of her beauty and speech have attracted Phaon, a Greek youth, who was hitherto devoted to his daughter, Climené. Yet there seems to exist between the old priest and Sappho a bond which he feels but cannot understand. The olive garland of the festival is bestowed on Alceus; and so great is Sappho's joy at her friend's triumph, that Phaon suspects in him his rival in love. His suspicion is fostered by Alcandrus, and, believing himself deceived, he

repels and deserts Sappho. But, in her grief and despair, she wanders from city to city, from island to island, in search of Phaon, and finally reaches Leucadia. It is here that the fates take her to the home of Climené, from whom, though a stranger, she claims and receives hospitality. Moreover, she is invited as a welcome guest to the marriage rites for which Climené is preparing. Sappho little dreams that the future husband of her hostess is no other than Phaon, and the climax of the dramatic action is therefore reached in the scene of the marriage rites, when Sappho recognises her lost lover, defies the authority of the high priest, and, maddened with passion and despair, desecrates the deity by overthrowing the altar tripod. Death, of course, is the only expiation of this sacrilege, and Sappho is preparing for her last hour when her faithful old servant suddenly reveals to those present that his unfortunate mistress is no other than the priest's eldest daughter, who, at a tender age, mysteriously disappeared, and whose loss her father and her sister Climené have never ceased to deplore. Overcome with joy, Alcandrus is ready by his intercession with the gods to save his daughter, who, however, after blessing her sister Climené and Phaon, and bidding farewell to all, throws herself into the sea from the famous Leucadian rock.

It will be seen that the story of Paccini's opera is, on the whole, true to the traditional version of Sappho's tragic end and the cause of her leap from the Leucadian rock. Alcandrus seems to correspond to her father, Scamandronymus, whom, it is believed, she lost at the age of six, though the exact place of her birth is uncertain, and is generally assumed to have been either Mytilene or Eresus. After leaving Lesbos, when still in possession of her beauty, she is supposed to have gone to Sicily, and finally to have found her death in the manner described, owing to her unrequited love for Phaon. Alceus the poet, whose name Paccini has introduced, though he does not appear, was a contemporary of Sappho, and, like many others of literary fame, was frequently in her company, though there is certainly nothing to show that their relations were more intimate. Phaon is generally admitted to be a fiction, his name being probably derived from Adonis, Venus' favourite, whom she frequently mentions in her odes, and who in some legends is called Phaeton, or Phaon. Again, even the leap from the Leucadian rock is hardly more than a fiction, a mere poetical figure expressive of a violent love from which relief is sought by plunging into the sea from that famous promontory. The general features of Sappho's character as depicted in Paccini's opera are, however, singularly in harmony with the idea we are able to form of the warmth and purity of feeling, as well as of the graceful beauty and sweetness, which, to judge from her matchless ode, and fragments of other works, must have been the attributes of the Greek poetess, whose character, after being so long reviled, was at least vindicated by Welcker.

The centre figure of Paccini's opera is, of course, Sappho, and comparatively little scope is left for the secondary characters. The language of the libretto is effective, poetical, nay, in some parts, very powerful, and throughout it is infinitely superior to the libretti of the Bellini, Donizetti, and Rossini school, which at the time when Paccini wrote his opera still reigned supreme in Italy. The whole character of Paccini's music, too, differs widely from that of the then dominant school, and excels by an intensely dramatic element which, though almost strange on a first hearing, is peculiarly attractive, and on better acquaintance reveals the unusual power and vigour of the composer's style. His airs are extremely pathetic and melodious, without, however, ever sinking to the level of Bellini's essentially effeminate melodies, while the recitatives, too, are vigorous, and bear the stamp of originality. Among the many beautiful numbers of the score are notably "Di qui soava la grime," the duet between Sappho and Climené (soprano and contralto), and the celebrated ensemble and finale (the scene of the marriage rites), in the second act; the former a lyrical gem of sublime beauty, and the latter a pattern of most powerful dramatic writing. Sappho's airs in the third act, "Teco dall' are pronube," and "L'ama ognor qual io l'ammì," also count among the brightest jewels of the opera.

The part of the heroine requires naturally a dramatic artist of the very first order to do it justice, and it is only fair to say that Signora Urban, who has made Sappho her speciality, is such an

artist in the fullest sense of the term. Her compass, her vocal powers, her execution, no less than the energy, the fiery passion, and withal the sweetness and sympathetic grace of her acting, are altogether extraordinary, and never fail to carry away the audience. Her performance of Sappho in Rome won for her a gracious gift from the young Queen of Italy in the shape of a costly bracelet, and the enthusiasm of the audience knew no bounds when the distinguished artist appeared in the next scene, her arm adorned with the testimony of royal favour. It cannot be said that at the recent performance at the Teatro Nuovo in Florence she was well supported, for the orchestra, the artists, and the choir alike were far below her level. Yet her very presence seemed to infuse vigour to the minor parts, and imparted a swing to the performance which otherwise would have been almost a failure. She herself achieved triumph after triumph, and her appearance in a part which in dramatic power would have been worthy of a Tietjens, has been hailed with lively satisfaction by all those who value and appreciate Paccini's *Sappho* as a work of genius.

C. P. S.

Foreign Correspondence.

MUSIC IN PARIS.

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT.)

PARIS, January 15, 1881.

THE great musical event of last month was the representation for the benefit of the Association of Dramatic Artists, at the Opera. The name of every Parisian artist of reputation was on the programme; but M. Halanzier, the director, wished some special attraction, and, after much difficulty, succeeded in securing the services of Mme. Mariette Alboni. Every place was taken, and an immense sum of money was realised for the association. After the curtain fell on the third act of *Aida*, it was raised to display a concert stage, and the audience waited breathlessly for Mme. Alboni. As she appeared, the enthusiasm could not be restrained, and she had a reception such as few artists obtain at the present day. She sang the cavatina from *Romeo and Giulietta*, and "Dona Caritea," by Mercadante. Her voice is like velvet, and the lower notes are still the traditional Alboni tones. She could not be induced to respond to an encore, and as she left the stage for the last time, many in the audience said, "Adieu, adieu!"

Some concerts have been given at the Grand Hotel recently. At the last the singers were Mles. Riservelli and Gastaldi, and the programme comprised "Argonaise," by Serpette; an air from *Ballo in Maschera*, by Verdi; and "Si j'étais Roi," by Adam.

On January 12th the National Society of Music gave a fine concert at the Salle Pleyel. M. Saint-Saëns, and M. and Mme. Lalo, were the best-known names on the programme. M. Saint-Saëns played four selections from Chauvet's Works. M. Lalo conducted his own composition, a quatuor for stringed instruments. This work is spirited, and without doubt one of the best compositions of the kind. Mme. Lalo's wonderful voice was heard in the serenade from the *Roi d'Ys*, and a song from *Sapho*. M. Marsick executed on the violin a rêverie and guitare composed by M. Lalo.

On Sunday, January 16th, at the thirteenth Châtelet concert, *L'Enfance du Christ*, by Hector Berlioz, will be given. It is divided into three parts, "Herod's Dream," "Flight into Egypt," and the "Arrival." The rôles have been distributed as follows:—Mary, Mlle. Vergin; Joseph, M. Lauwers; Herod, M. Vernouillet; and the Centurion, M. Devineau.

The music on Christmas Eve at Saint-Eustache was finer than ever. The solos were sung by MM. Faure and Gailhard, and the chorus was one that showed the effects of the best training.

MUSIC IN VIENNA.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

VIENNA, January 12th, 1881.

OUR third Gesellschafts-concert had the following programme:—Overture "Genoveva," by Schumann; violin-concerto, No. 9, by Spohr; two choruses *à capella*, by Rubinstein and Goldmark; three pieces for violin; and the 42nd Psalm, by Mendelssohn. The concerto was performed by Herr Leopold Auer (a pupil of our Conservatoire in 1856-58). Herr Auer is well known in London, having played so frequently at the Musical Union. Criticism is therefore superfluous. Intonation, tone, *technique*, &c., show a first-rate artist, and makes the more regrettable that his tone is so very thin. That was felt as much in the concerto as in the solo pieces by Rubinstein (Melodie, transcribed for violin), by H. Wieniawski (*Legende*), and by himself (*Tarantelle*). That choice for a great concert was not good, the little change in tone he exhibited falling with monotony on the ear. However, Herr Auer was received with great applause. He is announced to give two soirées for chamber music, with D. Popper, &c., as quartett partners. Mendelssohn's Psalm was excellently performed under the careful conductorship of Herr Gericke, the present concert-director. The soprano-solo was sung by Frl. Minna Walter, the daughter of our esteemed singer of the Hofoper. She is a pupil of Mme. Marchesi, and her tone and deliverance were most fascinating. At the next concert we are to hear Schumann's *Faust*. The Philharmonics gave the fourth and fifth concert. At the former we heard Vorspiel und Isolde's Liebestod, from *Tristan und Isolde*, splendidly performed under Herr Hans Richter; recitative and air of Juno, from *Semele*, by Handel, well sung by Frl. Rosa Bernstein; the new "Tragische Ouverture," by Brahms; and Beethoven's 8th symphony. The overture is composed in that great, broad, and grave style which we admire in all the works of that composer, and the instrumentation is excellent. However, the title "Tragical" is not well chosen. It would be, according to its character, better entitled, perhaps, "dramatic" or "heroic" overture.

In any case we look for another work richer in style, which will be in a short time an ornament to every orchestral programme. Herr Brahms has meantime left Vienna for Breslau, to perform there his second overture at a festival (which is to include some popular students' songs) in return for the distinction of the doctor's degree recently conferred upon him. In the first concert of the Wiener Männergesang-Verein the music to *Edipus*, by Mendelssohn, was performed with connecting poetry, the *dramatis persona* spoken by members of the Stadttheater. Hellmesberger's quartet party performed, on the third evening, quintet in A, by Mozart (with clarinet), quartet by Beethoven, and a new piano-quartet, F major, by Scharwenka, performed by himself. It is a clear and engaging work, and was received with great applause. Grün's quartet party (third evening) executed a quartet, B flat, by Goldmark, and likewise Mozart's clarinet quintet. Between both numbers Herr Leschetizky was heard with Rubinstein's piano trio, B flat, an excellent performance. At the last evening we heard a quartet, E minor, by Volkmann, the piano quintuor by H. Goetz (Herr Kremsner) and Beethoven's quartet, Op. 131. The third quartet party (Radnitzy) produced on its fourth evening a quartet by Rufnatscha, an esteemed composer, living in Vienna, Schubert's piano trio, Op. 100, and Beethoven's quartet, Op. 130. There is, you will remark, no want of chamber music. Among the rest of the other concerts I may mention that of Herr Jos. Labor, who performed, on the great organ in the Musikvereins-Saal, pieces by Bach, Buxtehude, Mendelssohn, and others for the piano in his own skilful manner. The singer, Felice Manio, well received in his first concert, gave a second one, and performed solo songs by Astorga, Caracciolo, Tosti, Schubert, Catalani, Marchesi, Jensen, Denza; duos (with a lady) by Boito, Blangini, D. Pérez; and a terzetto by Jomelli. Herr Professor Anton Door gave his third and last trio soirées, in which was heard a trio, G minor, by Hans von Brossart; variations, Op. 7, for piano, by Nawratil; präludium and fuga for piano, by Goldmark; and a piano quatuor, Op. 23, by Jul. Zellner. The three last-named pieces are interesting every one

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in its kind, and particularly the last one, which is worthy to be recommended. It may interest you to hear that Mme. Amélie Ernst, "officier d'Académie, lectrice en Poésie à la Sorbonne," gave two soirées de Poésie et de Musique dans la salle Bösendorfer. The lady read Poésie et Prose d'Alfred de Musset, de Murger, Victor Hugo, Amélie Ernst, Théodore de Berville, Lord Robert Lytton, Louis Ratisbonne, Béranger, and Mulhauser. On the second evening Director Hellmesberger and his quartet party performed the first and second movement of a *quatuor posthume inedit*, of H. W. Ernst. A young pupil of Mme. Marchesi, Mlle. Rosa Papier, won great favour for her singing, and for her most beautiful voice. Still there were many piano concerts on the piano by Alfred Grunfeld, Waldemar von Pachmann, well known abroad, especially by young ladies, who find it important to count, year by year, on a certain day, the number of their friends, and to pay the expenses of a musical evening. As an oasis among such deserts the yearly concert of Fr. Johanna von Seemann is welcomed with pleasure. She is the only one who thinks it necessary to engage an orchestra. This time under the conductorship of Hofkapellmeister Hellmesberger. She was heard in Beethoven's concerto in G, and in another by Edvard Grieg, never performed in Vienna. It is a most interesting work, but it, however, requires a most energetic hand, and a large room, on account of the brilliant passages and full instrumentation. The lady performed also a Rondeau in F, by Couperin; Gavotte d-moll, by Kirnberger; Caprice sur les airs de ballet d'Alceste (Gluck); and a piece (Au bord d'une source), by Liszt. All was performed to perfection, and in a style which nowadays is so seldom heard on the martyr instrument called piano.

The Hofoper is now sailing under the guidance of a new ferrymen, Herr Wilhelm Jahn, recently Kapellmeister in Wiesbaden. He entered upon his duties as opera director on January 1st. He has the reputation of being an intelligent, energetic, learned, and steady man, and it is hoped that the opera will feel in good time the benefit of his experienced hand. Since my last report Herr Winkelmann has performed the parts of *Eleazar*, *Siegfried*, and *Tannhäuser*, and has won the favour of the audience more and more. A young tenor, Herr Bogdany, made a failure by his performance of *Faust* (Act I.) and *Raoul* (Act IV.), being still too much of a beginner. Frau Lucca, who had recommended him, sang on that evening *Elsa* (Act II.) with surprising vigour. Fr. Brandt, from Berlin, being invited, sang "Fides" for the benefit of the Pensions-fond, and was brilliantly received. Of the new opera, *Bianca*, by Ig. Brüll, there is little to say; the libretto is very poor, and the music is not much better. Though Fr. Bianchi had the first rôle, the work did not please. After two performances of *Bianca*, Bianchi vanished; *Bianca* was heard no more, and Bianchi went back to her former rôle. It is to be hoped that Herr Brüll, a talented man, soon will sharpen out the notch. The year began with *Monsieur et Madame Denis*, by Offenbach, a bad omen; it was performed with the ballet *Fantasca* as an afternoon performance.

Operas, performed from December 12th, 1880, to January 12th, 1881:—*Die Jüdin, Bianca* (by Ig. Brüll, first performance, once repeated). *Siegfried, Postillon von Lonjumeau, und Der Schauspieldirektor, Götterdämmerung, Così fan tutte, und Der Schauspieldirektor, Tannhäuser, Faust* (Act I.), *Lothengrin* (Act II.), *Hugenotten* (Act IV.), on one evening—*Der Prophet, Robert der Teufel, Entführung aus dem Serail, Faust, Das Goldene Kreuz* (ballet *Coppelia*), *Philemon und Baucis* (ballet *Nails*), *Carmen, Freischütz, Nachmittagsvorstellung, Monsieur et Madame Denis* (ballet *Fantasca*), *Nachtwandlerin, Tell, Schwarze Domino, Martha, Mignon, Lustigen Weiber von Windsor, Barber von Sevilla, Preciosa* (with the actors from the Burgtheater), *Meistersinger, Rigoletto, Zauberflöte, and Afrikanerin*.

Reviews.

Popular Pieces for the Clavecin. By J. P. RAMEAU. Selected and Revised by E. PAUER. London: Augener & Co.

THE time is not far distant when the name of Rameau was almost unknown, except to musical antiquarians, and to them

only by one or two smaller works. Now the great interest awakened in the minds of all pianoforte students, especially through the revival of the old dance measures, has made his name and labours more widely known. Not only he, but many others—his contemporaries, predecessors, and successors—have done good suit and service in the cause of the development of musical resources. Many of the forms adopted by them have become old-fashioned, and to a certain extent superseded by the inventions of later writers, but they were valuable in their own day as marking the progress of growing knowledge, and they are not less useful in the present as showing the stages to the perfection we now enjoy through the works of Mozart, Beethoven, Schumann, and others. A study of the pieces now brought together helps largely to the understanding of the estimate in which Rameau was held in his own day, and as the truth is always the same, and the beauty which charmed the ancients not less attractive now, there is little doubt but that the works here collected will charm the heart and please the ear as agreeably in these degenerate days as they did in times past. There was a fashion at one period to disregard the labours of these old worthies, not because they were bad or useless so much as for the reason that the instrument for which they wrote—the clavecin—had become superseded by the more improved pianoforte. It was perhaps only part of the following of the usual order of things that the older works, not being so well calculated to exhibit the merits of the new instrument, should be laid aside in favour of those things written expressly with a knowledge of the powers of the recent invention, and that which is once laid aside is soon forgotten. Accident often rather than design leads to their recovery, and when once their perpetual claim to consideration is acknowledged, there is little fear that they will again fall completely out of memory. The spirit which prompts the modern editor to collect and revise the works of a once forgotten master, whose labours ought never to have fallen into utter disuse, is a good one, and worthy of support and recognition by all students and all masters who love their art. Mr. Pauer has not gone to the usual source to which those who give examples of Rameau ordinarily resort, but has made his choice of somewhat newer things, all of which possess great merit. There are twelve pieces in all, some of them already well known, others that are not at present, but soon will be. They consist of "Les tendres Plaintes," in D minor; "Le Rappel des Oiseaux," in E minor; "Rigaudon" from the opera *Dardanus*, in G major; "La Poule," in G minor, the probable original of the more modern movement in a set of quadrilles; "Passepieds," from the opera *Castor et Pollux*; "Les Niais de Solonge," in D minor; "Gavotte," in A minor with four variations; "L'Agaçante," in G major; "Forlane" in the same key, from *Les Sybarites*; two minuets, in G major and minor; "Sarabande" from the opera *Zoroastre*, in E major; and "Deux Gigues en Rondeaux," in E major and minor. These are all made interesting further by their having the date of publication or production, or some other notes concerning them. The only improvement which could be suggested is that in future editions some explanation of the peculiar graces, turns, and *agremens* might be given as a guide to those who wish to play the pieces, but cannot refer to a master who is acquainted with them. In some instances the grace-notes are written out, in others the signs are left as they were first given. For the rest, it is enough to say that the pages are brightly engraved and clearly printed, and the price at which they are published is not an extravagant one.

BURNS: *Second Scotch Rhapsody.* Composed by A. C. MACKENZIE. Op. 24. London: Neumeyer & Co.

As far as can be judged by the pianoforte copy of this "Rhapsody" the work shows a great advance in thought, and a clearer freedom in treatment than the first of the like kind from the same hand. The composer in his first dealt with a Scottish theme in a general way, and by means of his music gave a very excellent series of pictures of Northern scenery. Now he deals with a person, Robert Burns, the *beau ideal* of Scottish peasant intellect and genius. As such it will assuredly commend itself to all brethren of the "land o' cakes." Looked at as music pure and simple, it ought to find admirers every-

where. There is a fine healthy current of thought and freshness of treatment, which is as invigorating to read as the air from the Northern hills is to breathe. It is less Wagnerian in its design than might be expected from the author of the former work, and the happy "lift" of its melodies will find response in other hearts than those of Scottish birth. Although it is called a Rhapsody, and by that title disarms all expectation as to shapeliness of form and character, yet there is a distinct method in the arrangement, and some degree of respect for the old traditions of order. There are three movements, each headed by a quotation from Burns, and presumably intended to stand as a key to the purpose of the movement. The first, "Molto maestoso," has for motto "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled;" the second, "Andante," is headed by the words "She's fair and fause that causes my smart;" and the third, "Vivace," bears the verse, "I cost a stane o' Haslock Woo'." The first two movements are continuous, that is to say, there is no break, but the one follows the other. The quiet effect of the "Andante," with its delightful melody, after the warlike "pibroch" of the first, is most striking. In the final movement the "bagpipe" character is further hinted at by the "drone" bass of the accompaniment, which is effective enough in the pianoforte arrangement, but would doubtless be more largely so in the score of which it is confessedly a reduction. There is a large amount of very excellent writing in the Rhapsody, and it may be hoped that some of the directors of the orchestras in London, where such things would find a fit hearing, may be induced to give it a place some time or another. It is certain to give pleasure, as it is sure to augment the reputation of its composer.

Fliegende Blätter. Flying Leaves. Short Pieces for the Pianoforte, by CORNELIUS GURLITT. Op. 112. London : Augener & Co.

"A LITTLE STUDY," the first of these "Flying Leaves," is a perfect gem, of very few bars in length, but of infinite value for the delight it brings. "In the Highlands" is Weber-like in thought, but as simple and as sweet as the delicate little flower which hides its beauties in some leafy shade. "The Ghost Story" is full of that character of weirdness which always surrounds the relation of some childish and ever-attractive legend; the recurring passages of arpeggios suggesting the indulgence in that customary shudder which the repetition of the ghost tale might be supposed to call into existence. The whole are so easily written, that young players of very rudimentary powers might not be "fear'd by their imagery;" and older players, witnessing the under-current of taste and artistic work which lies beneath them, will not despise the indulgence in the pure pleasure they bring.

Three Mazurkas and a Bourrée, for the Pianoforte. By FLORENCE MAY. London : Lamborn Cock.

THE composer has dedicated the three mazurkas to Mlle. Janotta, and in her hands they would doubtless obtain the development of every point in their construction to the fullest extent. They are so written, however, that their musical value is patent without the need of having it exhibited by a star pianist; for the composer has, almost without effort, certainly without any such appearing, written three of the most attractive, because simple, pieces in mazurka form it is possible to desire. Their simplicity is not because of lack of strength, for it is impossible to read them without becoming aware that their author has full command of the instrument for which she writes, but prefers to reserve power rather than to force it forward. For all that the form she has chosen has been well used, she proves that there is yet a possibility of saying something new in an acceptable way. The three mazurkas are very different to each other, and all are interesting.

The bourrée is marked by like musicianly qualities, and is far above the average in point of thought and treatment of the usual things poured forth in this form. One of the great charms of the piece lies in the fact that it is in two-part writing throughout, yet the harmonies appear to be full and complete. Most musicians know how difficult it is to write interesting music in two parts. Very few of the younger writers can claim to be successful in their attempts at harmony, even when they employ

handfuls of chords to cover their lack of invention. Miss May has in this instance proved her right to be considered as a musician quite out of the common run.

Nocturne Album. A collection of celebrated Nocturnes for the Pianoforte. Selected, fingered, and revised by E. PAUER. London : Augener & Co.

THE present collection comprises pieces by John Field, Charles Mayer, Franz Schubert, Rossini, Hiller, Thalberg, Dreyschock, Döhler, Willmers, Schulhoff, Wollenhaupt, and De Vilboc. All the pieces here gathered together are pretty well known; but the opportunity now afforded for comparing the treatment exhibited by each composer is an excellent one, and for which Mr. Pauer, careful editor as he is, deserves once more special mention and a vote of thanks. This is the first time that such a collection has been made, and the student will be able to make himself acquainted with the best and most famous works under this title, the invention of which is undoubtedly due to John Field. The writer of the article "Nocturne," in "Grove's Dictionary," gives a very interesting notice of the pieces so called. It is there said of Field's Nocturnes, "that although there are eighteen or nineteen so called, not more than about twelve of them deserve the title. They are widely and deservedly popular, not only for their intrinsic charm of freshness and simplicity, but also on account of their being the predecessors of Chopin's Nocturnes, which undoubtedly owe their form, though not their characteristic melancholy, to those of Field. It is very interesting to compare some of the Nocturnes of both composers—for instance, Field's No. 5 in B flat, with Chopin's Op. 32, No. 2, both the first and second subjects of each bearing a striking resemblance to those of the other composer. The Italian form of the word Notturno is employed by Mozart to denote a piece in three movements for strings. It is also used by Mendelssohn for the title of the lovely *entr'acte* in the 'Midsummer Night's Dream' music, which represents the sleep of the lovers." The collection now before the public does not contain any of Chopin's pieces under this title, as they are readily attainable elsewhere. Those that are here gathered together are scattered about in various collections or in separate pieces, and all will agree that the labour of bringing to one head all the many beautiful pieces in the volume by Mr. Pauer has been a task which ought to be regarded with satisfaction.

Mendelssohn's Songs. For the Pianoforte. By TH. KIRCHNER. London : Augener & Co.

IT is quite possible that many who see this work for the first time will wonder why the like attempt on a systematic plan has not been made earlier. There are many people whose enjoyment of Mendelssohn's music is likely to be increased when it is not encumbered by indifferent words which weaken, if they do not destroy, the pleasure it brings. It is too true that the majority of the "poems" connected with the songs in the collection now under notice can scarcely be called other than a concourse of words in very few cases fortuitous, and although the principal of turning a song into a pianoforte piece is not to be wholly followed, neither is it to be condemned, especially when it is executed with as much taste and judgment as in the present instance. There are ten pieces so treated, namely—1, Bei der Wiege; 2, Frühlingslied; 3 and 4, Rei-elfieder; 5, Gruss; 6 and 7, Suleika; 8, Auf Flügeln des Gesanges; 9, Venetianisches Gondellied; and 10, "Es ist bestimmt." They are all very ingeniously done, and approach as nearly as possible the character of the composer's own "Songs without Words."

Scenes of Childhood (Kinderscenen). By R. SCHUMANN. Op. 15. Easy Pieces, with Annotations, Revised and Fingered by Prof. Th. Kullak. (Harrow Music School Series.) London : Augener & Co.

THESE elegant little pianoforte pieces by Schumann are happily so well known as to render a detailed account of them superfluous. It may, however, be stated that the present edition is a new one, carefully revised, and with the fingering marked by Th. Kullak. It forms one of the "Harrow Music School Series," and being

beautifully printed, and published at a cheap rate, is not likely to confine its usefulness to a limited area.

Serenade (Ständchen) and *The Forest Tops are rustling* (Des Waldes Wipfel rauschen). Two Songs, with Accompaniment for the Pianoforte. By FLORENCE MAY. London: Lamborn Cock.

IF the remaining four in the set of six to which these two songs belong are equally as good, then it must be said that it is not often that a young writer exhibits so much genuine poetical feeling and expression as are herein contained. The two songs now under notice are very good, and display real talent. The words of each are aptly fitted with appropriate and expressive music. The first, a serenade, has an admirable melody, quite original in form and style, and, above all, very vocal. There are no difficult intervals to sing, and no *ad captandum* devices to fetch applause. The accompaniment, part and parcel of the song, is no adventitious adjunct written because such things are necessary; it is exactly the right form such a part should take. In the second song, "The Forest Tops are rustling," the accompaniment in arpeggios throughout has just that breezy effect which might be deemed characteristic in agreement with the nature of the words, and here again the voice part is such as a singer with any degree of appreciation could make very effective. Both German and English words are given; the latter, by the composer, are poetical and singable, two very good qualities not always found in unity in modern songs.

Together. Ballad, by ANTONIO MORA. London: Augener & Co.

A PRETTY, almost idyllic treatment of some well-written words, which tenor singers with some command of expression would find good means for effect.

The Rose and the Star. Sollst meine einzige Rose nun sein. Music by FRANZ ABT. London: Augener & Co. FREQUENT and copious as are the beautiful melodies poured forth by this facile writer, the virtue, sweetness, and piquancy of them is the more manifest at each new supply. The present is in nowise inferior in any of the qualities looked for in a good song.

The Childhood of Christ. A Sacred Trilogy. By HECTOR BERLIOZ. London: Forsyth Brothers.

THIS is an English version of the poem written by the author of the music, and although it cannot be unreservedly praised for its elegance of diction or complete success as a collection of words suitable for singing, it is tolerably faithful to the original, and will serve until a better is given to the world. The music, which is among the more readily acceptable of the works of Berlioz, was written in his later years, and was produced in his lifetime at Paris and Brussels, in the year 1854, with some degree of success. It has recently been given at Manchester under the direction of Mr. Charles Hallé, who is responsible as editor and arranger for the present publication. It may be soon looked for in London. At present it will be necessary to confine the remarks that may be made to the printed copy, and at the outset it must be acknowledged that Mr. Hallé has done his share of the duty, if he be not the author of the translation of the words, with exceptional care and judgment.

As the title implies, the work is divided into three portions, namely, "King Herod's Dream," "The Flight into Egypt," and "The Coming to Sais." Each of these parts is again subdivided into certain scenes, in which the incidents are sung by a narrator (tenor), Herod (bass), Joseph (bass), the father of a family (bass), and Mary (soprano), with a chorus of soldiers, magicians, people, &c.

The chief points of interest in the first part are the night march, a bold and effective piece of writing in C minor, Herod's account of his dream, weirdly and strangely set, the equally wild and mysterious chorus of magicians, and the incantation music,

in which the almost unearthly character is enhanced by the rhythm of alternate bars of triple and duple time. Herod's command to seek "for the young child" and to slay all infants of two years old and under, and the savage chorus, "Let the sword be bared for slaughter," ends these first scenes. We are now supposed to be in the stable at Bethlehem, where Mary is singing a lullaby to her child, to which Joseph ultimately joins his voice. The angels warn the parents of Herod's wrath and counsel the flight; and in this a curious effect is introduced which only Berlioz would have devised. "If the work is executed in a theatre the chorus should be placed so as to have a curtain before them. This should be let down to the level of their heads at the beginning of this *finale*, in order that by letting it fall completely the sound may be softened." Further, for the due effect of the last five bars, the chorus should turn round and sing them *from not to* the public, to produce the utmost *pianissimo* possible."

The second part contains some very beautiful music—the assembly of the shepherds at the stable-door, expressed in a lovely *pastorale*; the chorus "The farewell of the shepherds," almost chorale-like in character; a charming instrumental piece, depicting the "Repose of the holy family," out of which grows a graceful tenor song, sung by the narrator; concluding with a short chorus of "unseen angels." "The coming to Sais" is the longest part of the work, and has some fine dramatic music descriptive of the weariness and faintness "nigh to death" of the child and his mother. Their hospitable reception by the father of a family of Ishmaelites, after their cruel repulse by the Roman guards and inhabitants of the city, is well described. There is, among many striking points in this part, a melodious serenade and a fine chorus for the Ishmaelites, with a soprano solo superimposed, with which the work ends. In the execution of his design Berlioz has adopted a quieter and less eccentric method of expression than might be expected from him by those who know only his *Damnation of Faust* and his *Scenes in the Life of an Artist*. His picture, or poem, or by whatever name it may be called, is none the less attractive for all that it is framed in a gentler mood; and although as music it may or may not be successful with the public when it is performed, it offers a phase in the musical mind of its author which is freer in a great measure from his customary eccentricity, while its contrasts of colour show, as they could scarcely fail to do, the hand and mind of the true and earnest artist.

Sonate für Klarinette und Pianoforte. Componirt von C. WINNERTON HEAP. Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel.

THE constructive power exhibited in this sonata is admirable. As far as the mere outlines of form are concerned all respect seems to have been paid to the traditions of the elders, and a regard for the best part of new fancies in music. In the ideas and thoughts which clothe those forms there are phases of melody and passages of harmony which tell of powers by no means of the common order. There is no elaborate introduction, but the clarinet with the piano starts at once with the first subject, which is utilised in an effective manner, and the needs of sonata form duly observed throughout this first movement, both instruments having bright and interesting work to do, which well displays the characteristics of each. The second movement, an "Adagio," a beautiful piece of writing, has a well-sustained melody for the clarinet, accompanied by a varied series of passages on the pianoforte which has the effect of continually augmenting the interest. The modulations in this section which are modern in style are also striking and effective, without being violent or forced. The "Finale," though slightly Mendelssohnian in character, has a considerable amount of individuality of treatment as well fanciful as scientific. There are passages in fugal imitation which among other things show scholarship, rightly and pointedly applied, and the whole composition is a very worthy example of clever design worked out in a most musicianly and accomplished fashion. The sonata is dedicated to Mr. Henry Lazarus, *facile princeps* of the clarinet, and all that is left to be desired after recording it, is to hope for the time and opportunity of hearing him play it.

Reeves' Musical Directory for 1881. London : W. Reeves.

THE new issue of this very useful publication contains a few improvements upon the former publications, inasmuch as the Profession, recognising its value, have, by their contributions, increased its accuracy and trustworthiness. There are still many faults to correct, but they are comparatively few and almost insignificant. There is a considerable amount of information concerning musical societies, bandmasters, and the musical staff of the several cathedrals of the United Kingdom. As usual with all technical directories, there are one or two amusing and interesting facts to be gleaned from these pages, interspersed with more serious matter. Thus we can know, among other things, the addresses of professors of the banjo, the penny whistle, and the Jew's-harp, if we desire to astonish our friends by the display of accomplishments upon these out-of-the-way musical instruments.

Musical Studies. A Series of Contributions by FRANCIS HUEFFER. Edinburgh : Adam & Charles Black.

THE author of this book, in his preface, states his reasons for collecting and republishing the articles in the form in which they now appear, maintaining that the volume is part of an unmistakable movement in modern literature. The vast development of periodical publications within the last quarter of a century has drawn the best literary and scientific workers into its vortex. Few authors now-a-days can withstand the temptation of the immediate and vast publicity conferred by the prestige of a first-class Review; fewer can materially afford to give years of, in most cases, ill-requited labour to the composition of a book. Books in the proper sense of the word—that is, organisms developed from a central idea, are in consequence becoming rarer and rarer in our literature, and collections of essays take their place. The influence of such a system on the reading public is too obvious to require explanation, supply and demand following the same law of reciprocity in literature as in other merchandise. If even illustrious scientific men give way to this general tendency of the age, the musical critic may claim the same indulgence for his modest offering. So far the reason for the publication of the book is clearly stated. Its character may be told in a very few words: a series of criticisms from different papers, brought together in the belief that their value is so permanent as to warrant their rescue and preservation. There is a review of Thayer's "Beethoven," containing not undeserved strictures upon the construction of that book; an article on "Foreign Schools of Music," pleading for the establishment of a great national centre of musical tuition; reviews of *Carmen*, *Polyeucte*, and *Le Roi de Lahore*, reprinted from the *Times*; notices of the lives of Chopin and of Arthur Schopenhauer, from the *Fortnightly Review*; a description of the *scenario* and the poetry of Wagner's "Ring of the Niblung," from the *New Quarterly*; the letters from Bayreuth, apropos of the performance of the same, written originally for the *Examiner*; and an article upon "The Chances of English Opera," from *Macmillan's Magazine*. The subjects are interesting, and the manner in which Mr. Hueffer has written about them adds to the interest. It is true that he tells us nothing new; there is no original research in any one of the articles, still the facts are pleasantly laid down, and lucidly commented upon. The reader may not always be able to accept the lofty ruling of the essayist, but he will scarcely fail to find something to engage his attention, if not his sympathies, in the perusal of the book. For some such reason he will be able to frame an excuse for the introduction of an article on Schopenhauer into a collection of musical studies, for Schopenhauer was not a musician but a German metaphysician, "the only one," according to Mr. Hueffer, "who has said anything worth listening to about music, and in whose system the art plays a prominent, one may say, vital part." The name of this philosopher will be new to many musicians, and a few words concerning his views may not be held to be out of place. The nature of the system referred to above is thus told:—"It is the aim of all arts to express the eternal essence of things by means of the Platonic ideas, only music takes in this respect an exceptional position. Arts, like painting and sculpture, embody these ideas as conceived by the

artist through the medium of phenomena, the ideal value of which he shows, but only by the reproduction of their actual appearance. Even in poetry the realities of life and the visible wonders of the world, with their symbolical meaning, form an essential ingredient. Music, on the contrary, does not want, nor even allow of a realistic conception. There is no sound in Nature fit to serve the musician as a model, or to supply him with more than an occasional suggestion for his sublime purpose. He approaches the original sources of existence more closely than all other artists—nay, even than Nature herself."

This view is accepted by all thinking musicians, and even though the enunciation is not novel, it is none the less welcome for a fresh utterance.

It would seem to be almost an ungracious task to criticise the critic, and as no particular good can be arrived at through the process, it may here be simply said that, of the several articles in the book of studies, those upon Wagner will be accepted as the best, as being most original in thought and treatment. The articles on "Foreign Schools of Music," and "The Chances of English Opera," show no new power of statement or novelty of argument to justify their acceptance as the sum of the generally received opinions upon the subjects.

Concerts.

MONDAY POPULAR CONCERTS.

THE Monday Popular Concerts were resumed on January 3rd, and the programme then heard was greatly enjoyed by a large audience, assembled in spite of the counter Christmas attractions elsewhere. The quartet in E flat, by Anton Dvorak, given at one of the concerts of last season, and now repeated in obedience to the general request of a large number of the regular subscribers, was the most important feature of comparative novelty. The quartet is held, by those who are in a position to know, to be a fully representative work by the Bohemian musician, and one which deserves frequent repetition at these concerts. It is, for the most part, in the form favoured by the earlier and better composers of chamber-music, the chief departure from the models furnished by them in their works being in the introduction of melodies and rhythms presumably Slavonic. If the permutations of form are nearly exhausted, as many of our persistent journalists would have us believe, new composers are right to think it wise to trust to that with which they are most familiar, and which they know is capable of producing a definite effect. It is better to do this than to endeavour to eliminate novel forms which are for the most part only seen to continue and end in confusion. Dance melodies and measures are always popular, even with those who cannot associate any peculiar terpsichorean motions with their tunes. Their very popularity arises from the regularity of their forms and rhythms. Things which are shapey, especially in music, never appeal to the ear in vain. Dvorak's quartet is particularly shapey in those movements which are founded upon the repetition of his native melodies, and the novelty in idea thus gained strikes the mind with a sense of freshness which is in itself the very fount of interest. Mme. Norman-Néruda, Messrs. Ries, Zerbini, and Piatti, played the work in such a style as to secure most enthusiastic applause after each movement, and at the close gained for themselves a hearty recall.

Mme. Néruda also charmed her hearers by her solo, which was a sonata in D for violin, by G. F. Handel, for which a pianoforte part had been made out of the original figured bass by Mr. Charles Hallé. The sonata, which is as full of music as an egg is full of meat, was welcomed with the liveliest favour, as it deserved to be, as well for itself as for the genial and spirited style in which it was played. The applause at the end was deafening and continuous, and could not be quelled, even though the artist came up time upon time to acknowledge it. It was only silenced while she played a Tambourin by Leclair, of like antique, but never old-fashioned music.

Mr. Eugene D'Albert was the pianist, and he made choice of Mendelssohn's prelude and fugue in E minor. He played with faultless execution, but with less power of expression than might have been expected from him after the first display of his skill given here a few weeks back. He has yet much to learn, but the power he possesses leads to the belief that he will not be long in acquiring all necessary strength of capacity.

The singer was Mr. Oswald, and he sang two songs in a really commendable style.

[February 1, 1881.

.On the following Monday the programme subjoined was given.

PART I.

Quintet, in g minor, No. 6, for two violins, two violas, and violoncello	..	Mozart.
Mme. Norman-Néruda, MM. L. Ries, Strauss, Zerbini, and Piatti.	..	
Air, "Il pensier sta negli oggetti?"	..	Haydn.
Miss Hope Glenn.	..	
Sonata, in c major, Op. 53 (Dedicated to Count Waldstein), for pianoforte alone	..	Beethoven.
Mlle. Marie Krebs.	..	

PART II.

Song, "A lonely Arab maid" Weber.
Miss Hope Glenn.
Serenade Trio, in D major, Op. 8, for violin, viola, and
viocello Beethoven.
Mme. Norman-Neruda, Herr Straus, and Sig. Patti.

It is quite unnecessary to dilate upon the merits of the opening piece, Mozart's quintet, as it is so well known and loved that it has been performed here twenty-five times, and a description of it is therefore not expected in this place. The performance was splendid. The serenade trio was no less appreciatively given and received, and the elements of success were thereby duly secured for these two masterly examples of concerted writing by two great musicians. Mlle. Marie Krebs on this occasion made her re-appearance in London, after a somewhat lengthened absence. She has been suffering, as our readers know, from a painful affliction in her hands, which compelled rest, and absence from playing. She performed the Waldstein Sonata in such a manner as to show no trace of loss of digital ability, and, if anything, a distinct mental gain. Her reading was on the whole a most intelligent one, as though during her enforced abstention from playing she had still been studying, and was able with her recovered strength of fingers to show increased strength of interpretation. She was most enthusiastically greeted as she appeared on the platform, and at the conclusion of her performance was recalled, and in answer to a demand which could not be misconstrued, played a second piece, Mendelssohn's posthumous study in F, in which she was as successful as in the Beethoven performance,

Miss Hope Glenn sang her two songs with great taste and expression, proving by her vocalisation that she has greatly improved.

At the concert of January 17th no novelty was offered, as may be seen by the following programme:—

PART I.

Quartet, in A minor, No. 1, for two violins, viola, and cello	Schumann.
	(By desire.)	
MM. Jean Becker, L. Ries, Zerbini, and Patti.		
Songs { "Aerndtlied"	Mendelssohn
"Willst du dein Herz"	Bach.
	Mlle. Friedlander.	
Variations sérieuses, in D minor, Op. 54, for pianoforte alone	Mendelssohn
	Mlle. Marie Krebs.	

PART II.

M. Jean Becker, L. Ries, Zerbini, and Piatti.
Schumann's quartet in A minor was played here for the fifteenth time, and Haydn's quartet for the sixteenth time. The first, introduced at these concerts in 1865, may be said to have enjoyed the privilege of being considered as a standard work of sufficient merit to be produced once a year since, a concession to the genius of Schumann which his admirers will proportionately value. It is, like most of Schumann's works, earnest, well-considered, and reflective of its author, and although the world refuses to accord to it a favour as great as that which is allowed to Haydn's melodious periods as shown in his quartet, it is always heard with growing attention by an audience presumably as well educated in music as that attending these concerts. This is especially the case when it is given with as much care and attention as on this occasion. M. Jean Becker, whose powers have been displayed in other places as well as in London many times previously, but here for the first time after an absence of more than twenty years, is an excellent artist, painstaking and conscientious, anxiously desirous of doing justice to his subject, and attentive to secure the hearty co-operation of his coadjutors for the purposes of a good *ensemble*. His services were duly recognised by the audience, who recalled him and his *compagnons* at the end of the quintet.

Mile. Marie Krebs, again the pianist, this time gave her hearers great pleasure by a capital performance of Mendelssohn's "Variations Sériesées. In conjunction with Signor Platti she gave Schumann's "Stücke im Volkston," Nos. 1, 2, and 4, repeating No. 2 in response to the unanimous desire of her hearers.

The vocalist was Mile Friedländer, and she received an encore for Bach's song, for the melody was one of irresistible fascination.

PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.

THE preliminary announcements of the intended operations of the Society give the names of the new directors, Messrs. W. G. Cusins, Francesco Berger, Henry Leslie, George Mount, Charles E. Stephens, John Thomas, and T. H. Wright. Mr. Stanley Lucas has retired from the post of Secretary, which he has held for so many years, and Mr. H. Hersee has accepted the post, and has shown his interest in the proceedings by subscribing the amount of a year's salary to the guaranteed fund, which has amounted to nearly £2,000. This fund is to secure as far as possible the society itself from pecuniary loss in case the concerts are not successful. There are to be six concerts during the season, and in order to secure as great an artistic success as is possible, there are to be two rehearsals for each. It was originally stated that Herr Brahms was to be invited to co-operate with Mr. W. G. Cusins as conductor of the concerts, but in consequence of his inability to attend at the time for the concerts to be given, Mr. Cusins will have the sole direction of the music—a duty for which his abilities fully qualify him to sustain with honour to himself and credit to the society. The first of the two rehearsals for each concert will be strictly private; at the second, to be held on the Wednesday preceding the concert, the subscribers, associates, and members will be admitted, as has always been the custom. Among the works spoken of as likely to be given, Hector Berlioz's *Romeo and Juliet* will occupy a prominent place. The voices necessary for the chorus will be furnished by the South London Choral Society. Mr. F. H. Cowen has engaged to write a new orchestral suite, and Herr Scharwenka, who will appear at one of the concerts, will on that occasion introduce his new piano forte concerto. None but vocalists of established reputation are to be engaged, Mme. Albani heading the list. The analytical programme will be written by Mr. F. Hueffer instead of Dr. Macfarren.

There is every reason to hope for good things in the future of the society, and the artistic world will watch with interest the events of the coming season.

Musical Notes.

GOUNOD's new opera, *Le Tribut de Zamorra*, is to be produced in Paris some time during the present month.

It is announced that Wagner's *Tetralogy of the Nibelungen* is to be produced during the summer season. The representations will occupy one evening and three afternoons. The most eminent German artists are engaged for the purpose by Mr. Maurice Strakosch, and the whole is said to be under the immediate supervision of Wagner himself.

RUBINSTEIN'S opera, *Der Dämon*, it is said will be given with all possible care and splendour at Covent Garden Theatre during the season of Italian opera.

LAST month a classical chamber concert was given at Lytham in the Baths Assembly Rooms by Miss E. M. Ewen, of Manchester. The artists were Miss Marion Cuddihie, vocalist (contralto); Mr. de Jong, flute; Mons. Vieuxtemps, violoncello; Herr Siegfried Jacoby, violin; Miss Ewen, pianoforte. The programme consisted of Haydn's C major trio for piano, violin, and violoncello; three movements of Weber's trio for piano, flute, and violoncello; variations for piano and violoncello, by Mendelssohn; solo from Bach, Sarasate, Raff, De Jong, &c. Miss Cuddihie's songs were Blumenthal's "The Wedding Day," Hullah's "Three Fishers," and "The Minstrel Boy." The concert was well attended, and in every way a success.

At the Christmas Examination at the College of Organists, the Fellowship was awarded to Messrs. W. G. Alcock; N. W. Barrow; James Bryant; Harry Dancey; A. J. Greenish; A. Gore Mitchell, Mus. Bac.; and C. J. Pearce, Mus. Bac. Thomas Adams and J. Dalby were made Associates. The number of candidates presenting themselves for examination exceeded the total of any similar preceding occasion. The examiners were the Rev. Sir A. F. Gore Ouseley, Bart.; Mus. Doc., M.A.; G. B. Arnold, Mus. Doc.; F. E. Gladstone, Mus. Doc., M.A.

stone, Mus.Doc.; Henry Gadsby; E. J. Hopkins; and E. H. Turpin.

BOITO, author and composer of *Mefistofele*, is writing a new libretto for Verdi's opera, *Simone Boccanegra*. He is also engaged upon a biography of Marcello.

HERR OTHO, of Leipsic, a member of the orchestra of the Gewandhaus Concerts, has constructed a new kind of double-bass with five strings, the lowest of which is tuned down to c, thus avoiding the necessity which sometimes exists in modern music for double-bass players to alter the tuning of their instruments.

AN English musician, Mr. Collard, has invented a new flute. He asserts that by doubling the last four holes he has improved the tones of the lower notes, while giving increased power, ease, and brilliancy to the instrument generally, and there is nothing more to pay for these improvements. The material chiefly used by the patentee for the head and body is ebonite, a preparation of india-rubber, which possesses extraordinary sound-producing properties. One of the great difficulties of the flute has always been the third octave, the fingering for which differs entirely from that of the first or second octaves; and the new flutes are constructed in such a manner that the third octave can be easily played with the same fingering as that employed for the two other octaves.

MR. SIMS REEVES has made arrangements with Mr. Barnby for a series of oratorio concerts at the Albert Hall. Mr. Reeves will be heard in all the great oratorios in which he has won his fame as a singer.

RICHARD WAGNER recently brought an action at Würzburg to recover possession of a manuscript of an early work of his, an incomplete opera entitled *Die Hochzeit*. With the unthinking generosity of youth he had presented this work, written as early as 1834, to a musical society at Würzburg. The society broke up, and was found on its dissolution to be owing money to its secretary, in partial payment of which it handed over to him the as yet unrecognised treasure. The secretary sold the manuscript for eight gulden to a musical bookseller. His son and successor, a certain Herr Röser, has lately advertised the manuscript for sale, but no more than 150 marks was offered for it. This was, apparently, too much for Herr Wagner. He has lost his case and had to pay the very considerable costs of the action. The fortunate owner will no doubt make a good thing of the manuscript, now that a fresh historical interest has been attached to it by the impetuosity of the composer.

MR. PAUER gave at the City Hall, Perth, on January 24th, an historical recital of pianoforte music. His performance was made additionally interesting by some critical and analytical remarks from his pen, which were given in the programme.

ON Monday, January 3rd, 1881, a preliminary meeting to a conference, to arrive at greater uniformity in the external arrangements of organs, was held at the College of Organists. There was a numerous attendance of organists and organ builders, evidently in earnest as to the object in view.

THE New York *Musical and Dramatic Courier* shows that Berlioz's *La Damnation de Faust* is exciting the same interest on the other side of the Atlantic as it does here.

MR. KÜHE has arranged to give at his customary "Musical Festival" at Brighton, during the course of the present month, several new and important works. The festival is to last for one week only on this occasion.

MR. REA's second subscription concert was given in the Town Hall, Newcastle-on-Tyne, on the 18th ult., to a crowded and fashionable audience. Mr. Ebenezer Prout's *Hereward* was the work performed, and Newcastle is, we believe, the first prominent town which has been thus favoured. Mr. Prout conducted his work in person. The soloists were Miss Anna Williams and Miss H. Tomlinson (soprani), Mr. H. Kearton (tenor), and Mr. J. Bridson (baritone). They were all in excellent voice, and sang to an enthusiastic audience. Notwithstanding Mr. Prout's antipathy to encores the double chorus finishing Part I. had to be repeated. As might be expected, the instrumentation is throughout a perfect masterpiece.

MR. W. GANZ will give five Orchestral Concerts during the season, in the months of April, May and June.

THE Practical Examinations in Music at the Society of Arts on January 10th and 11th were conducted by Dr. Hulland and Mr. W. A. Barrett at the Society's House.

WORKINGTON.—On the 13th ult. a grand Organ Recital was given by Mr. Dearnaley, at the residence of Peter Kirk, Esq., in order to inaugurate the new organ built for this gentleman by Messrs. Cole and Son, of Manchester.

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